**Living in the Father’s Love Outline**

***God’s fatherhood is more real than human fatherhood, because he is the ultimate source of our being; because he has thought and willed us from all eternity; because he gives us our true paternal home, which is eternal. And if earthly fatherhood divides, heavenly fatherhood unites. Pope Benedict XVI, Jesus of Nazareth***

1. Traits of a Father
	1. Protect and Provide
	2. Cherish and Love
	3. Teach and Listen
	4. Comfort and Encourage
2. Complications in our Image of Fatherhood
	1. Reality of Earthly Father Figures
	2. Existence of Evil
	3. Disappointed Hopes and the Blame Game
	4. My Will, My Way
3. Who is God the Father
	1. ***For God so loved the world,that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life. John 3: 16***
	2. ***Truly, truly I say to you, the Son can do nothing of his own accord, but only what he sees the Father doing; for whatever He does, the Son does likewise. John 5: 19***
	3. Creator, Love, Light, Mercy, Eternal, Powerful, All-Knowing, Everywhere
4. Traits of God as Father
	1. Protect and Provide: the soul for eternal life
	2. Cherish and Love: Blessing of Creation and Sacramental Grace
	3. Teach and Listen: Prayer, Scripture
	4. Comfort and Encourage: Blessed Mother, Angels, Saints, Body of Christ (eachother)
5. Character Traits for the Father’s Daughters
	1. ***God is within her, she will not fall.*** ***Psalm 46: 5***
	2. Authentically Herself
	3. Unashamed and Unafraid
	4. Transparent and Confident
	5. Perfectly Imperfect
6. Living the Feminine Genius as Daughter
	1. Receptive: look for the good in others and call it forth
	2. Sensitive: have big emotions which see with the heart
	3. Generous: attend to those in need
	4. Maternal: participate with God by bringing forth life
7. Be the Prodigal Daughter
	1. Come back to Him and Receive the life He’s given you
	2. Talk to Him in prayer
	3. Ask for mercy: confession
	4. Forgive poor father figures
	5. Seek wisdom and grace in the prayer, Scripture, sacraments

**On the Fatherhood of God**

Pope Benedict XVI AUD Jan 7, 2013

However, let us ask ourselves: how is it possible to think of an omnipotent God while looking at the Cross of Christ? At this power of evil which went so far as to kill the Son of God? Naturally, what we would like would be a divine mightiness that fitted our own mindset and wishes: an “omnipotent” God who solves problems, who intervenes to prevent us from encountering difficulties, who overcomes adverse powers, changes the course of events and eliminates suffering. Thus today various theologians say that God cannot be omnipotent, for otherwise there would not be so much suffering, so much evil in the world. In fact, in the face of evil and suffering, for many, for us, it becomes problematic, difficult, to believe in a God who is Father and to believe that he is omnipotent; some seek refuge in idols, succumbing to the temptation to seek an answer in a presumed “magic” omnipotence and its illusory promises. (Pope Benedict XVI AUD Jan 7, 2013)

Nevertheless faith in almighty God impels us to have a very different approach: to learn to know that God's thought is different from our own, that God's ways are different from ours (cf. Is 55:8) and that his omnipotence is also different. It is not expressed as an automatic or arbitrary force but is marked by a loving and paternal freedom. In fact by creating free creatures, by giving us freedom, God renounced some of his power, allowing for the power of our freedom. Thus he loves and respects the free response of love to his call. As Father, God wishes us to become his children and to live as such in his Son, in communion, in full familiarity with him. His omnipotence is not expressed in violence, **it is not expressed in the destruction of every adverse power as we might like**; rather it is expressed in love, in mercy, in forgiveness, in accepting our freedom and in the tireless call for conversion of heart, in an attitude only seemingly weak — God seems weak if we think of Jesus Christ who prays, who lets himself be killed. This apparently weak attitude consists of patience, meekness and love, it shows that this is the real way to be powerful! This is God's power! And this power will win! The sage of the Book of Wisdom addressed God in these words: “For you are merciful to all, for you can do all things, and you overlook men's sins, that they may repent. For you love all things that exist.... You spare all things, for they are yours, O Lord who loves the living” (11:23-24a, 26).

Only those who are truly powerful can tolerate evil and show compassion; only those who are truly powerful can fully exercise the force of love. And God, to whom all things belong because all things were made by him, shows his power by loving everything and everyone, patiently waiting for the conversion of us human beings, whom he wants to be his children.

God waits for our conversion. God's omnipotent love knows no bounds, to the extent that he “did not spare his own Son but gave him up for us all” (Rom 8:32). The omnipotence of love is not that of worldly power, but is that of the total gift, and Jesus, the Son of God reveals to the world the true omnipotence of the Father by giving his life for us sinners.

**This is the true, authentic and perfect divine power: to respond to evil not with evil but with good, to insults with forgiveness, to homicidal hatred with life-giving love.** Thus evil is truly **vanquished because it is cleansed by God's love; thus death is defeated once and for all because it is transformed into a gift of life.** God the Father raises the Son: death, the great enemy (cf. 1 Cor 15:26), is engulfed and deprived of its sting (cf. 1 Cor 15:54-55), and we, delivered from sin, can have access to our reality as children of God.